

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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USIA-15 CU-04 IO-14 EUR-25 DRC-01 /137 W

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R 301325Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9943

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 2303

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SF

SUBJ: POLITICAL PRISONER PROTEST MARCH BANNED

1. JOHANNESBURG MAGISTRATE MAY 28 REFUSED PERMISSION (UNDER TERMS OF GENERAL LAW FURTHER AMENDMENT ACT OF 1970) FOR STUDENT MARCH SCHEDULED MAY 29 IN JOHANNESBURG. MARCH, WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED APPROVAL OF JOHANNESBURG CITY COUNCIL, WAS TO HAVE BEEN PART OF NATIONAL UNION OF SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS (NUSAS) WEEK-LONG CAMPAIGN TO FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS.

2. GROUP OF 40 TO 50 STUDENTS VIOLATED BAN MAY 28 BY MARCHING SHORT DISTANCE FROM UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSRAND (WITS) CAMPUS IN JOHANNESBURG. SHORTLY AFTER THEY RETURNED TO CAMPUS, POLICE ARRIVED AND ARRESTED 11 STUDENTS FOR "OBSTRUCTING PAVEMENT." ON MAY 28 AND 29 POLICE CONFISCATED PAMPHLETS AND TOOK NAMES OF STUDENTS DISTRIBUTING THEM AT SEVERAL POINTS IN JOHANNESBURG. ON ONE OCCASION DOGS WERE USED TO DISPERSE AFRICANS WHO WERE BEING HANDED PAMPHLETS. THREE INCIDENT-FREE DEMONSTRATIONS REPORTEDLY HELD IN CAPE TOWN. OTHER MEETINGS SCHEDULED FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAMPUSES IN NATAL.

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3. NUSAS CAMPAIGN INAUGURATED MAY 27 WITH ADDRESS AT WITS BY

DR. CEDRIC PHATUDI, CHIEF MINISTER OF LEBOWA. GERSON VEIL, FORMER ROBBIN ISLAND POLITICAL PRISONER AND PREVIOUSLY ACTING PRESIDENT OF SOUTH WEST AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION, SPOKE MAY 29 AND SONNY LEON, LEADER OF (COLORED) LABOR PARTY, SCHEDULED TO SPEAK MAY 30. OTHER INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING CHIEF GATSHA BUTHELEZI AND HIS COUNCILLOR FOR COMMUNITY AFFAIRS IN KWAZULU, BARNEY DLADLA, HAVE PUBLICLY ENDORSED THE CAMPAIGN.

4. GOVERNMENT BAN ON JOHANNESBURG MARCH NOT UNEXPECTED IN VIEW OF CONCERTED ATTACK ON NUSAS CAMPAIGN WHICH BEGAN LAST MONTH IN AFRIKAANS PRESS. ACCORDING TO ONE ARTICLE, CAMPAIGN INITIATED AND DIRECTED BY ANTI-APARTHEID AND COMMUNIST GROUPS IN LONDON. NUSAS PRESIDENT CHARLES NUPEN HAS DENIED THESE ALLEGATIONS, BOTH PUBLICLY AND TO EMBOFF, STATING THAT LOCAL CAMPAIGN CONCEIVED WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF PLANS OF OVERSEAS ORGANIZATIONS. LEAD STORY IN MAY 26 AFRIKAANS SUNDAY NEWS-PAPER RAPPORT CHARGED NUSAS PLANNED TO DISRUPT CURRENT BRITISH LIONS RUGBY TOUR OF SOUTH AFRICA. STORY LINKED PLAN TO "JEOPARDIZE" LIONS TOUR WITH CAMPAIGN TO FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND WITH LONDON-BASED SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY. NUSAS DENIES THIS AND IS CONSIDERING TAKING LEGAL ACTION AGAINST RAPPORT.

5. COMMENT: NUSAS CAMPAIGN TO FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS COULD BE ONE ADDITIONAL FACTOR IN LEADING SAG TO DECLARE NUSAS AN "AFFECTED ORGANIZATION" UNDER TERMS OF ACT PASSED THIS YEAR (CAPE TOWN 147). THIS MOVE, ANTICIPATED IN STUDENT AND POLITICAL CIRCLES FOR SOME TIME, WOULD SEVERELY CURTAIL NUSAS ACTIVITIES BY CUTTING OFF IMPORTANT OVERSEAS FUNDING FOR ITS DISPARATE ACTIVITIES.
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